



Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration
P.O. Box 3621
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

ENVIRONMENT, FISH & WILDLIFE

May 1, 2001

In reply refer to: KEC-4

To: People Interested in the McNary-John Day Transmission Line Project

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is proposing to build a new transmission line that could affect you. This letter briefly explains what is being proposed, outlines our process and schedule, and invites you to meetings where you can learn more.

Proposal - BPA is proposing to construct a transmission line from the McNary Substation to the John Day Substation, a distance of about 75 miles (see enclosed map). The new 500-kilovolt (kV) line would begin at the existing McNary Substation in Umatilla County, Oregon, cross the Columbia River into Washington, and generally follow the River west through Benton and Klickitat counties. At the John Day Dam, the proposed line would cross back into Oregon and connect into the John Day Substation in Sherman County.

The proposed line would, for its entire distance, parallel existing transmission lines that run between McNary and John Day Substations. BPA has existing right-of-way available next to those lines for most of the distance. The new line would be in this available right-of-way wherever possible. The proposed line would use lattice steel structures that are about 145 feet tall.

The existing lines in this area are operating at capacity. With the power shortage that the Northwest is experiencing, many new generation facilities are being considered. The McNary-John Day line would help ensure that the newly generated power could move through the system.

Alternatives - At this point the alternatives we are considering for this project include alternative tower locations near the existing lines, and the alternative of not building the line (an alternative we always consider).

Public Meetings - We will soon start to assess the environmental impacts of the alternatives, but before we do, we would like to hear from you. What questions do you have? Are there other routes we should consider? What resources should we analyze? We have scheduled open house public meetings to hear your ideas.

Wednesday, May 23, 2001

4 to 8 p.m.

Paterson School
51409 West Prior Road
Paterson, Washington

Thursday, May 24, 2001

4 to 8 p.m.

Roosevelt School
615 Chinook Avenue
Roosevelt, Washington

We do not plan to give a formal presentation at the meetings, so come anytime between 4 and 8 p.m. Members of the project team will be available to answer your questions and listen to your ideas.

Other Ways to Comment - If you cannot come to one of the meetings, you can still comment. If you comment by June 7, 2001, we'll be able to incorporate your ideas into our environmental studies. Call BPA's toll-free comment line at 1-800-622-4519, and leave a message (please include the name of this project); send an e-mail to: comment@bpa.gov; or mail comments to Bonneville Power Administration, Public Affairs Officer - KC-7, P.O. Box 12999, Portland, Oregon 97212. You can use the enclosed form to submit comments if you like.

Process/Schedule - You may see a survey crew in the area as they begin preliminary mapping and design work to refine possible routes. We will also conduct on-the-ground environmental surveys. If we need to access property along the proposed route for this work, we will contact property owners for permission.

The information we gather in our environmental analysis will be published in a Draft Environmental Impact Statement that will be available for review and comment next year. If you would like to receive a copy, please return the enclosed postcard and check whether you would like to receive it by regular or electronic mail. If you do not return the postcard, you will still receive notice when the study is available.

Once we have completed the environmental review, BPA will decide whether and how to proceed with the project. If BPA decides to proceed, construction would likely begin in 2003.

For More Information - If you have any questions about this proposal, please call me toll-free at 1-800-282-3713, at my direct number, (503) 230-5525; or send an e-mail to lcdriessen@bpa.gov.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Sincerely,

/s/ Lou Driessen 5-1-01

Lou Driessen
Project Manager

3 Enclosures:

Map
Post Card
Comment Form